

Many Are Called

PATRICIA HANLEY

Once upon a time there lived a wise king whose only family was his son. When this boy became of proper age to marry, the king thought for many hours upon the kind of wife he should procure for him. At last he called together all his most trusted knights and said to them, "I want you each to bring to me the most mannerly maiden you can find."

After many weeks of search and adventure, all of the king's messengers had returned, bringing with them young ladies of many descriptions and nationalities. The king thereupon issued this decree: "All the maidens shall make this castle their home and shall live freely within it. At the end of thirty days I shall have decided who will be my son's wife and future queen."

Then the wily king called for his cousin, the countess, and told her she must disguise herself as a maidservant and spy upon the candidates for his son's hand. She should report anything of interest that would help him in selecting a wife for the prince.

It was not many days thereafter that the countess paid her cousin a visit. "There is a girl about whom I shall tell you," she said. "Her name is Marcia, and she is a princess in her own land. Marcia is a very charming girl, my lord. Her conversation is correct and tactful. She wears the right number of petticoats and invariably waits to be handed out of the carriage. But this morning when I accidentally cut the skin from her little toe, she beat upon my head and called me a clumsy wretch."

This was enough for the monarch. "We shall send her back," he stated.

Soon the king's confederate was back again. This time she told about a young lady named Annette. "She is a lovely child," was her account. "Though of rude parentage, Annette has learned the rules of etiquette from a lady in her country who concerns herself with teaching them to all the people. She is the very spirit of kindness and sympathy. There is only one drawback. The poor dear has never learned to be careful about her clothes, and I am afraid she has not been told that Lifebuoy . . ."

"Stop! That's enough!" cried the king. But the countess was not easily discouraged. Before long, she was once more at her cousin's side. She told him, while attempting to keep the tone of regret from her voice, of the girl Rebecca, who possessed all the requirements of a pleasing personality. "But there," she said, "is the rub. Rebecca is all too eager to prove her pleasantness. She has gone out of her way to please that scoundrel, the duke, and your third knight, and the chief steward, and your eldest nephew when he was visiting her last week. She has been here only twenty-one days."

"You are right," sighed the king. "I fear there will be found no one upon the earth worthy of my son."

But when next she appeared before her questing lord, the spy was very cheerful. "I believe I have good news," she began. "There is a girl named Joan, with whom I can find no fault. She is sweet and courteous, correct, modest, dainty, intelligent, and lovely to look upon."

His highness was greatly pleased with this. He called his son into the room

and elatedly announced. "My beloved heir, at last I have found you a wife. For a young woman she is very nearly perfect. Her name is Joan.

"That dame?" screamed the prince. "Oh, h____, pa! Why dontcha let me

handle my own affairs? I've been watchin' that babe, and, I tell ya, she won't do. She's a complete frost, that's what, a complete frost!" And he stormed out of the kingly presence, slamming the door behind him.

They Will Do It Every Time

DONALD GOBEN

To relax in a large, comfortable chair and listen to soft music after a long day's work is my idea of heaven on earth. Each evening I arrive home tired, dirty, and rather ill-humored. After washing and cleaning up a little, I settle down in my easy chair and turn on the little push-button radio.

The push-button radio is a wonderful invention. For, inclined as I am to be slightly lazy, it facilitates the finding or getting rid of different stations.

Last evening I turned on the radio in my usual manner. It shouted, "Listen to Terry and the pirates."

"I will not," I thought, and pushed the second button.

"The Russians slaughtered another 15,000 Nazis today in a bitter battle," the second station said. Slaughtering was the last thing I wanted to hear about.

I pushed the next button. "And so died the famous William Wetface," that station said. Who William Wetface was I did not know, and I cared considerably less.

The succeeding station blared a military march. "Now who feels like marching at this time of evening," I thought.

A sports commentator from another station said, "The Caps beat St. Louis last night in a close game."

"Well," I thought, "we don't have such a bad team after all, but I want music." At last the soothing strains of a waltz floated up from the radio. "At last," I thought, and settled back to enjoy it.

"Don, fix the furnace, and go to the store for bread." It was my mother's voice.

"They will do it every time," I said softly as I rose and turned off the radio.